

Lipocarpus aristulatus (Coville) G. Tucker

halfchaff awned sedge
Cyperaceae (Sedge Family)

Status: State Threatened

Rank: G5?S1

General Description: Adapted from Hickman (1993): A diminutive annual with a stem that is ¼ to 6 in. (1 to 15 cm) tall. The inflorescence is comprised of 1 to 3 spikes that are 1/8 to ¼ in. (3 to 7 mm) long, generally more or less open, and oblong to generally cylindrical. The outer floral bract is oblanceolate with a body that is 1/32 in. (¾ to 1 mm) and an awn that is 1/64 to 1/32 in. (½ to 1 mm). The inner flower bract is more or less equal to the fruit. The fruit is 1/32 in. (¾ to 1 mm), widest just below the tip, bumpy or warty, and light reddish brown to black. The faces of the fruit are generally flat to concave.

Identification Tips: *Lipocarpus aristulatus* is most closely related to *L. micrantha*. These two species can be distinguished by their inner flower bract, the awn of the outer flower bract, and their fruit. The inner floral bract of *L. aristulatus* is more or less equal to the fruit, the awn of its outer floral bract is 1/64 to 1/32 in. (½ to 1 mm), and its fruit is light reddish-brown to black. The inner floral bract of *L. micrantha* is less than ½ the size of the fruit, the awn of the outer floral bract is less than 1/128 in. (¼ mm), and its fruit is light brown. Use of a technical key is needed for positive identification.

Range: This species is found from California north to Washington and west to Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, and Indiana.

Habitat: This species prefers wet soil at an elevation of 328 to 1312 ft (100 to 400 m). In Washington, *L. aristulatus* has been found along shorelines and islands below high water on silty substrates from an elevation of 360 to 420 ft (110 to 128 m). These areas are often dominated by *Juncus* and *Eleocharis* species. Common associates include grand redstem (*Ammannia robusta*), lowland rotala (*Rotala ramosior*), slender flatsedge (*Cyperus bipartitus*), Owyhee mudwort (*Limosella acaulis*), yellowseed false pimpernel (*Lindernia dubia*), and in some cases, Columbian yellowcress (*Rorippa columbiae*).

Ecology: *Lipocarpus aristulatus* grows in moist soil and mud, often comprised of fine sand and silt, in bottomlands, sandbars, and beaches at low elevations.

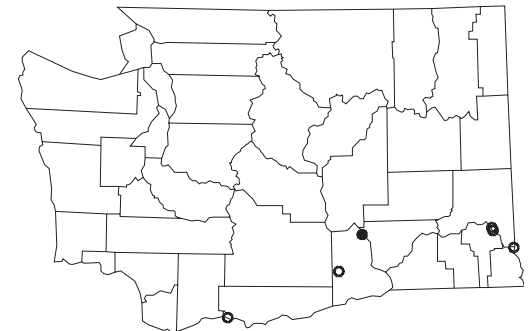
Lipocarpus aristulatus

halfchaff awned sedge



Illustration by Dinea Norrell

Known distribution of
Lipocarpus aristulatus
in Washington



- Current (1980+)
- Historic (older than 1980)

Lipocarpa aristulata

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Photo by Devin Malkin



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State Status Comments: The species is known from two recent occurrences along the Columbia River in Benton, Grant, and Franklin counties and five historical occurrences from Klickitat, Whitman, Benton, and Asotin counties.

Inventory Needs: Moist areas at low elevations in Benton, Grant, Franklin, Klickitat, Whitman, and Asotin counties should be systematically surveyed for additional populations. Historical occurrences should be revisited.

Threats and Management Concerns: Hydrologic change is the primary threat at this time.

Comments: Hitchcock et al. (1969) refers to this species as *Hemicarpha micrantha* var. *aristulata*.

References:

Hickman, J.C. 1993. The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California. University of California Press, Berkeley. 1400 pp.

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1969. Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 1: Vascular Cryptogams, Gymnosperms, and Monocotyledons. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 914 pp.

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